

THE NATIONAL ACADEMIES

Advisers to the Nation on Science, Engineering, and Medicine

Policy and Global Affairs
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December 22, 2003

To: Michael Boyd, Cognizant Technical Officer
Office of Economic Restructuring and Energy (EREO)
U.S. Agency for International Development/Armenia

From: Glenn Schweitzer, Director, Office for Central Europe and Eurasia

Re: Quarterly Report on Cooperative Agreement #111-A-00-03-00080-00
Science and Technology in Armenia: Current Status and Future Prospects

As required under point A.5 of the above-mentioned Cooperative Agreement, we are hereby submitting our quarterly performance report for the period October 1 through December 31, 2003, on the project "Science and Technology in Armenia: Current Status and Future Prospects." The required financial report will be submitted separately by the Office of Budget and Financial Reporting of the National Academies.

Achievements During the Quarter

Immediately after receiving notification of funding support, we began developing the committee roster and contacting potential members to determine their availability. The following committee members were nominated to serve and approved according to standard National Academies procedures:

Dr. John Baldeschwieler, California Institute of Technology (Chair, Chemistry)
Dr. Robert Anex, Iowa State University (Energy and Environment)
Dr. Barry Barish, California Institute of Technology (Physics and Astronomy)
Dr. John Filson, U.S. Geological Survey (retired) (Earth Sciences)
Dr. Norman Neureiter, U.S. Department of State and Texas Instruments (retired)
(Computer Sciences)
Dr. Abigail Salyers, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign (Biological and Health Sciences)

A copy of additional biographical data on the committee members as posted on the Academies website is attached for your reference.

Project staff members also began collecting extensive background information related to the project and developing a draft outline of the project report, to be further refined by the

committee as they prepare for their visit to Armenia. Staff also initiated contact with personnel from the Embassy in Yerevan to check that the dates proposed for the visit would be acceptable.

Obstacles Encountered and Addressed

Earlier in the fall, we had been advised that the Embassy in Yerevan would have a Science Fellow on detail from the National Science Foundation and that this individual would be assigned as official liaison with our committee. We had expected that the Science Fellow would be available to assist in gathering background information for the project and setting up meetings and site visits for the committee. Just recently, however, we learned that the Science Fellow had declined the assignment, and while the Department of State is still looking to fill the position, it is uncertain when or if anyone will be identified. In the meantime, we have been told by Aaron Sherinian, a political officer at the Embassy, that our point of contact there would be Traver Gudie, an economics officer. There have been some problems in communicating with him, but we hope that the situation will improve as the date of the committee's visit approaches and we require more specific cooperation on logistical matters.

As for the Science Fellow's anticipated assistance in gathering background data and setting meetings, our staff will instead take on this task and will contact Armenian institutions directly to make the necessary arrangements.

Plans for Next Quarter

During the coming quarter, the committee will travel to Armenia from February 21 through 29 in order to visit relevant research and educational institutions, government agencies, and other organizations. Plans call for the committee to split into two or three subgroups in order to cover more institutions than would otherwise be possible. Prior to the visit, staff will prepare and distribute to the committee members extensive briefing materials to provide them with background information on the Armenian science and technology sector in general as well as the specific institutions they are to visit. Staff will also be in contact both with the designated project liaison at the Embassy in Yerevan and with representatives from Armenian science organizations and specific institutes to be visited.

Following the visit, committee members will be asked to prepare reports on their observations, especially with regard to their own particular areas of expertise, and to make recommendations to be considered by the entire committee for inclusion in the final project report. Staff will then compile the committee members' findings and recommendations into a draft of the report.

cc: USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse
Ms. Maria Longi, State Department EUR/ACE